United Nations S/2018/671

Security Council

Distr.: General
6 July 2018
English
Original: Spanish

Letter dated 5 July 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the item "Maintenance of international peace and security: mine action" which was considered by the Security Council at its 8304th meeting on Friday, 29 June 2018.

The Government of the Argentine Republic wishes to exercise its right of reply with regard to the statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in relation to the Malvinas Islands on that occasion.

In this regard, the Argentine Republic reiterates the particular situation of the Malvinas Islands, in accordance with the content of the interpretative declaration that it made at the time of its ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Ottawa Convention) on 14 September 1999. To date, that declaration has not been amended, and it constitutes the main basis of the extension granted to Argentina for the destruction of anti-personnel mines in mined areas in accordance with article 5.1 of the Convention.

The Malvinas Islands are the only part of Argentine territory that is affected by anti-personnel mines, but Argentina is prevented from gaining access to those mines in order to comply with its obligations under the Convention, given that the territory, together with the South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, is illegally occupied by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and is the subject of a sovereignty dispute.

Indeed, the General Assembly has recognized the existence of a dispute between the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and North Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, and has urged the two Governments to resume negotiations in order to find a peaceful and definitive solution to the dispute as soon as possible.

The Special Committee on decolonization has expressed the same opinion through the adoption every year of a resolution stating that the way to put an end to the dispute is through negotiations between the two parties. The most recent of these resolutions was adopted on 21 June 2018.

When making its extension request, on 1 October 2009, Argentina submitted a schematic plan for implementing article 5 of the Ottawa Convention in the disputed

areas over the 10 years of the extension, in the event that the negotiations on sovereignty between the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom were to resume and, within this framework, both countries were to reach an agreement on the clearance of anti-personnel mines (including unexploded ordnance).

The Argentine Republic reaffirms its rights of sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, which are an integral part of its national territory.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alejandro Guillermo **Verdier**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.